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*How the baby was
saved [and 2 other stories].*

John K. Hastings, Google



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THE BABY.

HOW THE BABY WAS SAVED

BY JOHN K. HASTINGS



BOSTON: H. L. HASTINGS, 47 CORN-

LONDON: SAM'L BAGSTER & SONS, 15 PATERNOSTER ROW

1882

[ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL]

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HOW BABY WAS SAVED

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HOW BABY WAS SAVED

HOW THE BABY WAS SAVED.



H, now I'll get a chance to watch the baby. Father and mother have gone down stairs, and mother said I needn't get up till breakfast, 'cause I was up late last night"—and so Master Walter ran out of his own little room and crawled very carefully into the low bed

where baby Herbie was. Walter was seven

years old and very wise in *his* opinion, but why that baby didn't have any more hair on his head was a mystery even to him. He felt cautiously of that member and shook his own head profoundly. Then the baby made some curious faces that amused him very much.

After a while, he heard a rattling in the fire-place. He turned around and saw a bright blaze in the open grate, that danced cheerfully up the black throat of the chimney, and cast a ruddy light into the room. But he did not see a lump of red-hot coal that flew out and rolled on to a corner of the bed quilt.

This fire-place was Walter's especial delight. He liked to sit before it and dream over stories of log cabins, and Indians, and wild-wood ad-

ventures of the past, that he had teased out of grandma. Once he fell asleep here, and before he waked up he had an "*awful* time!" He dreamed that he and Cousin Will were young settlers out West. One day they started out into the wilderness to hunt deer. They had just caught sight of a fine one. Will had taken aim and was about to fire when — "Ugh!" grunted somebody right behind them ; and before they could say "Jack Robinson" a *big red Indian* had each of them by the shoulder! "Ugh! White man caught now! Come with Indian! Indian kill!" How they escaped nobody knows, but Walter never dreamed himself into a place so close that he could not get out and dream again. What a

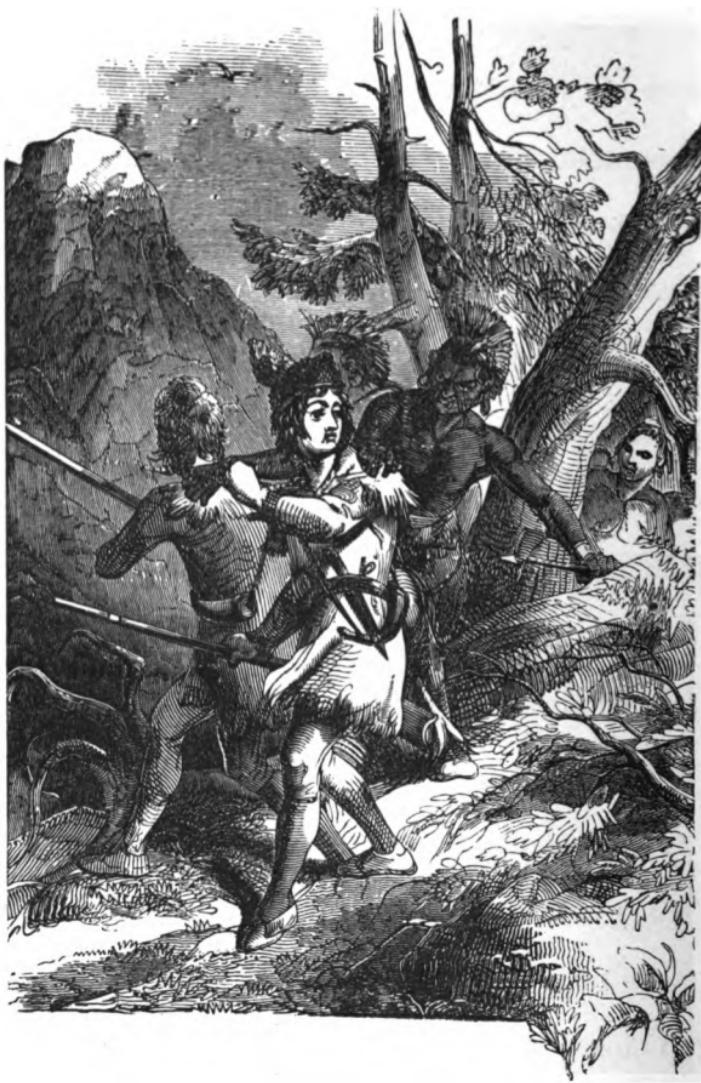


**“THIS FIREPLACE WAS WALTER’S ESPECIAL
DELIGHT.”**

terrible race it was though! Down the steep mountain side, over cliffs, through underbrush and briars, across streams, stumbling, falling — but Will and Walter were good runners, and finally won the race and reached home in safety.

But Walter was awake now, and as he gave one more look at his favorite dreaming place he said to himself: “Wish *I* had a fire-place in my little room. *Wouldn’t I have fires though!* And I’d make them all myself, too.”

Then he turned over to the baby. “I don’t see what makes him sleep so. I wish he’d wake up. But I’m sleepy too”—and he drew up closer to the little one, and was soon fast asleep himself.



"UGH! WHITE MAN CAUGHT NOW!"

Father and mother were in the dining room, three long flights below.

“Had we better call Walter to breakfast?” said father. “No, I guess we’ll let him sleep a while; it might wake the baby.”

Breakfast over, the family knelt down to thank the Father of all for his goodness, and to ask his care over all through the day.

But what is the matter with Walter, away up stairs? Why is he so uneasy in his sleep? His face is flushed, he turns his head from side to side and tosses his arms nervously. Now he wakes.

“Oh dear! I can’t breathe! My head’s awful hot—why! what’s that red thing?” As he turned quickly over he saw something that

made his blue eyes open very wide. **THE BED WAS ON FIRE!** There, where his head had been a moment before, a thin tongue of flame was licking the pillow-case, and reaching around to Baby's side! What was it, do you suppose, that made him do just the right thing, and drag his little brother out of bed first and then drop him, run to the top of the stairs and scream with all his might, and then go back and drag him from the room? Had he gone to the stairs first, his brother would have smothered, and if he had stopped to get him out of the room the fire might have got beyond control, for when father and mother came rushing up stairs the flames were up to the ceiling. Do you suppose the angels were watching the baby?



"AND DRAG HIM FROM THE ROOM."

There was a hard fight with the fire, but it had to die at last. A little piece of burnt coal was found among the ashes, that told the whole story. After it was all over the father and mother remembered their prayer and thanked God who had answered it. And that was how the baby was saved to grow up and be an active boy. "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

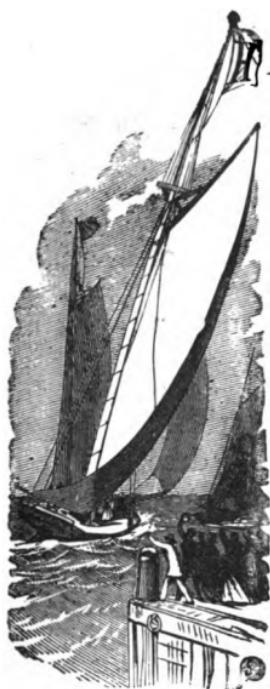


SPAR-YARD CHIPS



HARRY.

SPAR-YARD CHIPS.



“MARRY !” The playroom door was opened and a bright seven - year - old boy appeared at the top of the stairs, and answered :

“Here I am, mother. What is wanted ?”

“Will my boy take the basket and go down to the spar-yard and get me some more of those nice chips for kindlings ?”

Just what Harry wanted! The fact is he was a little more ready to go than he cared to show to his mother. His hat was on in a jiffy, his basket in hand, and he was ready to start. His mother bent over and gave him an approving kiss for his promptness.

“And now, my boy, you won’t go on the logs, will you?”

“Why, mother?” asked Harry, pleadingly.

“Because it is very dangerous, and you are only a little boy. How do you suppose mother would feel to have a little drowned boy brought home to her to-night?”

“But I won’t get drowned, mother.”

“That may be, Harry, but I want you to promise me like a good boy, and then I shall

feel perfectly easy.' The promise was given reluctantly.

Harry was a Charlestown boy, and not far from his home was a place in which he was much interested. It was this same spar-yard, on the banks of the Charles river. Harry liked to go there and watch the skilful spar-makers, working away on the logs with saw and adze and chisel, until they were changed into the polished spars that would some day carry the sails of gallant ships. Then off in the river he could see the tiny sailboats flitting swiftly across the waters—how he wished he had a sailboat—and now a great ship would come in sight—yes, *he* would be a sailor some day. But Harry's eyes only saw the Sunday



"HE WOULD BE A SAILOR SOME DAY."

clothes and fair weather and "good times" of those that go down in ships, that do business on the great waters. He did not think of the storms, the cold and heat, and all the hardships and dangers of a sailor's life.

But the greatest attraction was a boom of logs in the river in front of the spar-yard. It seems natural for boys to be happiest in places where they can break their necks the easiest. And Harry was a boy. A party of boys were on the logs when he reached the yard. His basket was soon filled, and then he sat on the edge of the pier to watch them. What fun it was ! They were running a race on the logs. How swiftly they jumped from log to log. How their merry shouts rang over the water.

“Oh, if I could only go with them,” sighed Harry. Then bitter thoughts came. “I don’t see why my mother can’t be like other boys’ mothers. Anybody would think I was a little baby. I guess I am big enough to take care of myself. I’ll keep my promise, of course, but I’m going to try just *one* log. That surely won’t be wrong.”



“FAIR
WEATHER.”

He climbed down and balanced himself on the log nearest the pier. It rolled slightly, and to save himself he jumped to the next one.

“There, I can’t help it now; I might as well go ahead.” He did not notice that every time

a boy jumped upon a log he pushed it farther from its neighbor. Nor did he consider that he was the youngest boy in the race, and yet, as the last in the line, had the longest jumps to make.

Ah, but wasn't it sport! To be sure conscience would give

Harry's comfort a twinge once in a while, but he was going to have some fun anyway.

“Oh, how slippery that log was!” The boys were far ahead. “My! I don't see how they got over *that* place. I



“HARDSHIPS AND DANGERS.”

guess I'll go back. What shall I do? It's too wide there, too. *Oh! oh!*" The log had begun to roll over in the water. He *had* to jump. His feet slipped the moment they touched the slimy log. The boys heard a scream.

"Halloo! Billy," shouted one of the big boys, "the baby has tumbled in; come and help him before he drowns."

Harry heard a horrible roaring noise as the harbor waters closed over his head, but louder than the waters a voice kept crying in his soul: "*This is the boy that broke his word. How will his mother feel to have a little drowned boy brought home to her to-night?*" Oh, if he had minded! If he had kept his promise! *Must*

he drown? His head struck something hard; it was the log rolling above him. He grasped it, but the bark came off at his touch. He fastened his nails deep into the wood till they were torn off and the blood started from his finger ends.

“O Lord, if you’ll only save me, I’ll”—poor little boy, he could hold on no longer.

“Heigh, Billy, do you see him?”

“There he is, t’other side o’ the big log. He’s about caved in. Hurry up.”

As two strong boys drew up the pale, dripping Harry, the pride of the boy who was “*big enough to take care of himself*” received a final crushing blow.

“Poor little fellow,” said one sympathet-



**"TWO STRONG BOYS DREW UP THE PALE,
DРИPPING HARRY."**

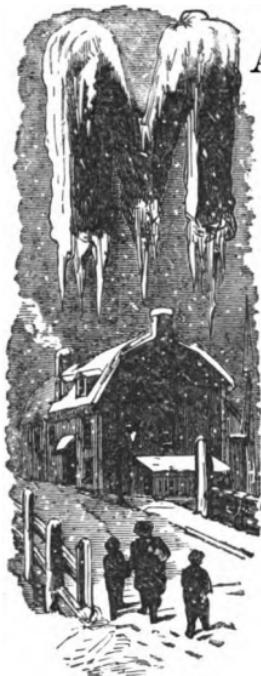
ically, "he hain't big enough for this kind o' fun. He'd better be with his mother." And Harry went, glad of the chance.



COASTING



COASTING.



AKE way ! we are coming !

“One ! two ! three ! here
we go, down the steep
hill-side and over the
snow !”

Cling to your sleds, and
hold fast, as you go bound-
ing over the ridges. See
the “Arrow” fly ! the
“Reindeer” leaps like a

thing of life, the “Rocket” shoots by in safety,

but Tom Brown's "Prancer" rears and lands him on his back.

Ah, Tom, what are you doing there?

"Getting up, of course, what do you suppose?"

The "Reindeer" and the "Arrow" are on a race; it is hard to say which will win, but Charlie, as he urges on his "Reindeer," does not forget to wave his hand with a hearty cheer as he speeds past Ned Wright's window, for Ned has been sick for several weeks, and it is hard for a boy to be forgotten by others when they are enjoying themselves.

Well, we are at the bottom of the hill, and now comes the tug and toil of climbing up again, step by step with slips and tumbles, but



"MAKE WAY! WE ARE COMING!"

at last we reach the top, and are ready for another start.

No wonder old men love to gather the children around them and tell those stories which always begin with :

“When I was a boy.”

And some who are not very old

can remember with strange delight those pleasant, happy days gone by, and often, with the remembrance of sport and mirth, come thoughts of “hair-breadth 'scapes and dangers imminent,” which sometimes shadowed



“CLIMBING UP AGAIN.”

the fun and frolic of those thoughtless hours.

Some years ago a little boy in Providence, rendered slightly insane by the possession of his first hand-sled and a pair of red-topped



“WHEN I WAS A BOY.”

boots, started off in the morning and went over to Pine Hill, where there was a long icy coasting ground, which crossed the railroad track under the brow of the hill, and extended into



"HAIR-BREADTH 'SCAPES AND DANGERS IMMINENT."

the field beyond. The large boys used to coast down this steep incline, while away on the left was a shorter coasting place, which was safer for the little boys.

Our youngster with the new sled appreciated the dignity of his position, and, disdaining this more limited field of operations, took his sled to the top of the high hill, and started down the long stretch at a time when no one else seemed inclined to go. It was a great



feat to reach the middle of the railroad track without tipping over; and he was so pleased when he had done it, that he stood up between the rails and shouted in high glee, heedless of the loud cries of the larger boys, who, he supposed, were trying to drive him from his sport; and when a big boy sprang to his side, and dragged him from the track, he felt grievously wronged, and kicked valiantly right and left with his new red-topped boots, nearly throwing the larger boy upon the track, and hardly giving him time to save himself; when there was a horrible roar of wheels and bells and whistles, and the lightning express swept by on its iron path, the "cow-catcher" giving the new sled a parting knock, as the little boy, now



G.W.D.

"A BIG BOY SPRANG TO HIS SIDE."

thoroughly frightened, jerked it from the track.

For a moment all were silent in suspense, and then, as the smoke cleared away, and the two boys were seen safe in the deep snow beside the track, cheer after cheer went up from the boys scattered up and down the hill.

But the little fellow who was rescued heard only a faint murmur for a moment, and then a great shadow seemed to come over him, and shut out all the rest of the world. He closed his eyes, and held his breath, and it seemed as if he could hear a still small voice, saying to him, “God was watching you; *thank him.*”

A humbled little boy dragged his new sled to the safer sliding place, which he had so despised a little while before, and all the time

that voice seemed whispering in his heart,
“God was watching you, thank him, thank
him.”

And so God has been watching him ever
since, and the little boy still lives to tell the
story of a heavenly Father’s care over a
thoughtless wayward child.



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